



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Idaho State Department of Education

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SUPERINTENDENT LUNA REQUESTS 6% INCREASE FOR IDAHO PUBLIC SCHOOLS NEXT YEAR

BOISE – Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna announced today he is requesting a 5.9 percent increase in state general funds for Idaho’s public schools for fiscal year 2015, which will fund the 2014-2015 school year. The increase covers the first year of implementation of the Task Force for Improving Education’s recommendations, as well as other key initiatives and programs for Idaho’s K-12 public schools.

“This is a prudent, responsible budget that outlines just the first year of a multi-year plan to improve Idaho’s public schools through implementation of the Task Force for Improving Education’s recommendations,” Superintendent Luna said. “With these changes, implemented as a comprehensive package, we can ensure every student not only graduates from high school but graduates prepared to go on to postsecondary education or the workforce without the need for remediation.”

Every year, state agencies are required to submit budget proposals for the upcoming fiscal year to the Governor and Legislature at the beginning of September. Superintendent Luna asked for an extension so he could incorporate the Task Force recommendations into his FY2015 budget request.

The Task Force recommendations include moving to a mastery-based system of education, broad support for the implementation of higher academic standards, increased technology to bridge the digital divide, a career ladder compensation plan for teachers, and restoration of operational funding for Idaho school districts, among others.

Here are the highlights of Superintendent Luna’s request for a 5.9 percent increase in state general funds for Idaho’s public schools in FY2015:

Teacher Pay:

The budget proposes \$42.5 million in new funding to implement the first year of a new career ladder compensation model for Idaho’s teachers. The Task Force developed this career ladder, which combines competitive salaries for teachers with incentives, rewards and accountability. The system will be tied to a revised system of state licensure. A technical advisory committee will continue to work on the details of implementation of the career ladder model for Idaho.

Once the plan is fully implemented, a beginning teacher in Idaho will make \$40,000 a year and can continue to earn salary increases based on experience, performance and other factors.

Operational Funding:

The budget proposes \$16.5 million to restore the first year of operational funding, or discretionary funding, for local school districts. This begins the Task Force recommendation to restore operational funding that was reduced from school district budget during the recession. Districts use this funding to pay for utilities, health care and other costs at the district level.

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Advanced Opportunities:

The budget proposes \$5 million in additional funding to expand dual credit, Advanced Placement and other advanced opportunities for high school students. This will build upon the current Dual Credit for Early Completers Program, 8-in-6 and other statewide programs to fulfill the Task Force recommendation for Advanced Opportunities.

Professional Development:

The budget proposes \$12.2 million in continued funding for professional development for Idaho's teachers. This line item continues funding spent at the state level to provide professional development on the Idaho Core Standards this school year and also continues to provide an estimated \$8 million to local school districts to buy professional development days for teachers. This helps fulfill the Task Force recommendation for Ongoing Job-Embedded Professional Learning.

The budget also proposes \$300,000 in continued funding for administrative evaluations and an additional \$250,000 to provide master calendar training to assist school administrators in creating time for job-embedded professional development and collaboration among teachers. These budget line items help fulfill the Task Force recommendation for Training and Development of School Administrators, Superintendents, and School Boards, and for Job-Embedded Collaboration/Professional Development and Site-Based Collaboration, respectively.

Technology:

The budget proposes \$13.4 million in continued funding for classroom technology. Of this funding, more than \$8 million is distributed directly to local school districts to spend on integrating technology in the classroom, and \$2.25 million is spent at the state level to provide a wireless infrastructure as well as support and maintenance for that infrastructure in every public high school. The remaining \$3 million has been set aside for technology pilot projects in Idaho's public schools.

School Safety and Security:

The budget proposes \$2.75 million in funding for Safe- and Drug-Free School Programs. Of this, \$2.2 million will be distributed to local school districts to invest in Safe- and Drug-Free School Programs at the local level. The remainder will be used at the state level to support Idaho's schools and districts and to implement the recommendations of the School Safety and Security Task Force.

Continued Work:

The budget proposes \$300,000 for technical advisory committees and a student advisory committee to continue work on the Task Force recommendations. Several recommendations, such as the Career Ladder and Mastery-Based System, will require additional work before they can be fully implemented.

Superintendent Luna met with representatives of the Idaho School Boards Association, Idaho Association of School Administrators, Idaho Education Association, Northwest Professional Educators and other stakeholder groups before submitting his proposed budget today.

This budget request will now go to the Governor's office for consideration. The Governor will present his budget request to the Idaho Legislature in January. The Legislature will set the budget for fiscal year 2015 early next year. Fiscal year 2015 begins July 1, 2014.

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